



Washington State Emergency Response Commission Meeting (SERC)

Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2020

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Virtual via Microsoft (MS) Teams due to COVID-19

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chief Mike Harris, SERC Co-Chair

Melissa Gannie, Washington State Patrol, Primary

Bill Slosson, Washington State Patrol, Alternate

Eli Levitt, Department of Ecology, Alternate

Troy Newman, Military Department, Primary

Erin Coyle, Department of Agriculture, Primary

John Himmel, State Department of Transportation

Chandra Fox, Local Emergency Manager, Primary

John Geppert, Department of Labor and Industries, Primary

Sean Davis, Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)-Eastside, Primary

Willie Barrington, Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)-Westside, Primary

J Havner, Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)-Westside, Alternate

GUESTS PRESENT

Kristen Rutherford, Homeland Response Force (HRF)

Joe Root, Puget Sound Fire

Brian Schaeffer, Spokane Fire

JoAnn Boggs, Pend Oreille County LEPC

Ashley Strickland, Columbia County LEPC

Cherie Nevin, Thurston County LEPC

Dan Cromwell, King County LEPC

Patrick Reid, City of Yakima Fire

Tom Sharp, King County LEPC

Cindy Stanley, Clark County LEPC

Ernie Schnabler, Cowlitz County LEPC

Sharon Wallace, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

Jordan Hanes, Franklin County EM/LEPC

Mary Ebbers

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT

Susan Forsythe, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

Scott Lancaster, State Fire Marshal's Office

Kim Mask, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

Tirzah Kincheloe, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

Diane Fowler, Department of Ecology

Annie Merritt, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

Pete Hartmann, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

Patrick Wicklund, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

Kent Catlin, State Emergency Management Division (EMD)

CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS

Chief Mike Harris called the meeting to order at 10:03 am with introductions.

UPDATE OF CHIEF WHEALAN

Chief Harris provided update on status of Chief Whealan, who announced his resignation as the SERC Chair, effective immediately. Chief Harris will continue as Co-Chair through 2021 or until a new chair is named.

NEW SERC MEMBERS

The Military Department appointed Troy Newman, EMD's Preparedness Section Manager as the new primary representative. He is replacing Sue Vezeau. Chris Utzinger will remain the alternate representative. Troy provided a brief history of his career with the Army.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 12, 2019, MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the June 17, 2020 meeting minutes was asked by John Geppert, seconded by Sean Davis. The minutes were approved as written.

WORKGROUPS AND STANDING REPORTS

Training Coordination (HazMat Training) – Scott Lancaster

All previous trainings had been cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. We are looking to start up training in the fall with limit class size and social distancing in place. Scott is looking at other ways to conduct trainings virtually with the assistance of the EMD Training Section as restrictions continue for face-to-face trainings.

EPCRA Compliance and Outreach – Diane Fowler

The Tier II reporting form has been updated to include additional chemical hazard categories found on the federal reporting form. The format of the Lat./Long. field has also changed – it is now in decimal degrees rather than degrees/minutes/seconds. These changes will impact reporters. Ecology will communicate these changes to businesses that report Tier Two and LEPCs. The EPCRA mobile app will be updated later.

SERC Budget Report – Susan Forsythe

EMD is in the process of breaking out the SERC budget and should have an update available by the next meeting. Currently, there has not been any funds spent due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Because the funding lasts until June 30, 2021, there may be opportunities for SERC Chair to attend national conferences in the future.

HMEP Grant Update – Tirzah Kincheloe

The FY16 grant is officially closed with a \$0 balance.

For FY19, approximately \$37,000 will need to be reallocated because of a budget surplus due to the inability to host the 2020 HazMat Workshop and LEPC/Tribal Conference due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Tirzah provided options for how to reallocate the money. For more information, the document presented is available [here, under the September meeting](#). The SERC voted to add additional attendees (lodging for up to 100 and include allowable meals) for both the LEPC Tribal Conference and HazMat Conference and spend the rest on purchasing Emergency Response Guides (ERGs). *See official*

motion made and approved at the end of the meeting minutes. If the conference cannot be held due to COVID-19 restrictions, the SERC will reconvene to vote on how excess funds can be spent using the HMEP Grant.

LEPC/Tribal Conference

Scheduling the for the LEPC/Tribal Conference to take place during the month of April. We will sign a contract with them with the caveat that if we cannot hold it in person, we will not be penalized for cancelling. **Chandra made a motion to move forward and sign the contract. This was seconded by Sean Davis and unanimously approved.** Because of audio issues during the last conference, audio accommodations (such as using microphones) will be addressed when setting up arrangements.

LEPC Planning Update – Susan Forsythe

There have been no submissions or reviews to any LEPC Plans since the last meeting. Despite the impact COVID-19 has had on LEPCs ability to meet, there are LEPCs working on their plans. EMD expects additional plans to be submitted late this year and early in 2021.

OLD BUSINESS

CBRNE Study Update – Kim Mask

There was a lot of discussion regarding making the document public due to some of the content. Some members would prefer not to publish at all. Some state agencies feel the study is incomplete due to not having comments included or clearly defined. John Geppert pointed out that it needs to be published due to use of public funds but with redactions made to information that could jeopardize security.

Chandra explained that the data included in the report is not complete, meaning there was limited input from across the state. Some agencies were leery of sharing information and others made false claims regarding the type of HazMat teams they were. The report makes the 10th CST appear to be the only capable HazMat team in the state.

Some members were wanting to know what the report would be used for. Susan explained that it could be used for Decision Packages by some agencies and there is information that could be incorporated into the SERC's Strategic Plan.

Because the contractors provided a final draft, the SERC can edit the report. There is a possibility of using some HMEP funds to update the report if it pertains to transportation.

Susan will research funding options and bring back to the SERC for more discussion when she has more information.

Strategic Planning and Charter Update – Chandra Fox

Chandra discussed the autonomy of the SERC because the SERC has a special status. Chandra also pointed out that the SERC has continued to meet during the COVID-19 crisis, and the EMC has not. Because of this, she feels the SERC should not be subordinate to the EMC. Chandra briefed that the discussion to break off the SERC from the EMC was with Robert Ezelle and Jason Marquiss prior to COVID-19. Troy will research and report back to the SERC. Chandra also feels that if the SERC'S Strategic Plan is going to be updated, it should be the SERC membership that does so and not use a third-party consultant. Chief Harris pointed out that the SERC Strategic Plan needs to add agency responsibilities, opposed to actual names to avoid gaps when members retire. Chandra and Mike will have further discussion offline and report back to membership.

City of Yakima LEPC – Patrick Reid

City of Yakima sent a letter, dated October 15, 2019, asking the SERC to recognize them as an LEPC again. Patrick Reid provided some background:

When the city of Yakima no longer had an Emergency Management Department, the SERC voted to recognize the county only as they were not meeting RCW 38.52.070 by not having a current Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) on file with EMD. With the exception of the CEMP on file within EMD, it was recognized that the city of Yakima provided documentation for establishing an LEPC.

Chandra's concern is what does this do to the Tier II reporters in Yakima county? Will reporters need to submit two reports, one to each jurisdiction? Patrick responded that since we lost the city's LEPC, the city's participation in county LEPC meetings is down to almost nothing. Currently, Yakima Fire is doing all plan reviews for the city. Patrick also stated that the CEMP was submitted before COVID-19, but he has not received confirmation from EMD. Susan will work with the Planning Section to track down the CEMP, otherwise, the city of Yakima will resubmit. WA EMD will then review the CEMP and provide feedback, providing assistance where needed to develop/complete the plan.

John Geppert asked if there should be any concerns about City/ County overlap. Any county or city can be an LEPC if they have a CEMP, and the example of city of Seattle and King County was given. Kent Catlin asked if Patrick had attended a Yakima County LEPC meeting recently as he has seen industry there but not the city. Patrick relayed that the county has not invited the city to any meetings.

Motion: Sean Davis made a motion to accept the city of Yakima be recognized as an LEPC in accordance with RCW 38.52.070 and verified that they have submitted their CEMP to EMD. John Geppert Seconds the motion. The motion passed with 5-Yes, 1-No, and 2-Abstain. Because of the meeting being held virtually, the votes were asked to each member attending.

Explosives License Update – Dan Massey, Department of Labor and Industries

Dan is working on a project to provide a data layer within the SEOC mapping platform (WISE) for fire professionals to identify the location of explosives during emergencies, such as wildland fires. Information would be provided to LEPCs and a map will be provided to vetted professionals. Secondary to this is a move within code – information would be pushed from state to local LEPCs. Therefore, the information would go up to state then back down. Chandra had issues understanding Dan and was not clear what was needed of SERC.

Kim explained that a list is sent to LEPCs from the AFT but is not all inclusive. She is asking the SERC to decide who gets the information and how they are vetted.

NEW BUSINESS

SERC Vacancies

Chief Whealan and Chief Harris met with Steve Wright, Executive Director of Washington Fire Chiefs Association. Steve Wright accepted Chief Whealan's resignation as chair of the SERC. Chief Harris will stay as acting chair into the next year. He will continue to chair the meetings until a new chair is appointed.

Emergency Response Guides

The free 2020 Emergency Response Guides have been received from PHMSA. They are being stored in a state warehouse and will be shipped directly to LEPCs and agencies. WebEOC Resource Tracker is being

used to facilitate the ordering and distribution process. LEPCs have been notified by regional LEPC Program Managers defining the ordering and shipping process.

Federal Rail Assistance Grant Program

Patrick Wicklund gave an overview of the grant program that may be available for LEPCs in future grant years. There were no questions.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Revisited the discussion about the reallocating the 19HMEP Grant funds. Suggestions were:

1. To include meals at the upcoming LEPC/Tribal Conference and HazMat Conference.
2. Competitive Apps for LEPCs
3. Travel for SERC members

Motion: Chandra made a motion to support the LEPC Tribal Conference with 100 attendees and allowable meals and remaining funds be used to purchase ERGs. Tirzah provided clarification that the funding would be to increase attendees to both the HazMat Workshop and the LEPC/Tribal Conference. The clarified motion was accepted. The motion was seconded by Sean Davis. The vote was unanimous, and the motion passed.

NEXT MEETING

2020 Meeting Dates

November 4, 2020

[Virtual using TEAMS](#)

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.